11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
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posted to alert the troops in case the enemy should attempt an attack at dawn. If the war was waged against foreigners, individual soldiers were allowed to keep a slave or a cow out of the booty; the remainder was divided between the district chiefs and the central government. In victorious civil wars against the enemies of the Mogho Naba, however, the entire booty was sent to the capital.

When the Mossi had to defend their own territory, their most common tactic was to evacuate the villages. This was the technique most often employed against invading French forces.[29] Other defenses included palisaded villages, barricades of fallen trees, trenches, and hedges, some with poisoned foot traps. Mangin reports that the Boulsa were defeated in their war with Fada-N'Gourma not only because their enemies fought valiantly, but also because they "were favored by very propitious terrain covered with thorny scrub, behind which the besieged men took cover to shoot on the Mossi."[30] Mangin does not say whether the scrub was poisoned, but his data indicate that this type of defense was common in the area. The Mossi say that the use of poisoned prickly plants (*silenage*) against invading forces dates back to the early conquest of the territory. Tradition recounts that Naba Oubri was unable to conquer Ouagadougou until his Ninisi wife advised him to shoe his soldiers against the poisoned foot traps of the aborigines.

Mossi wars or raids were usually limited to the dry season and stopped at the beginning of the planting season. Commenting on the war between Boulsa and Fada-N'Gourma, Mangin tells us: "This was during the dry season. Thirst completed what the courage of the Gyekango people had begun, and many Mossi perished."[31] Tradition recounts that it took Mogho Naba Waraga five successive years of attack before he defeated Ramzi, the rebellious chief of Riziam principality. He finally defeated him when his army attacked the province before its people had been able to harvest their crops and retire into an impregnable fortress for the dry season. Judging by the reports of European visitors, this type of dry-season warfare continued as late as the 1890's. For example, Crozat could not understand why the Mogho Naba did not send an army to defeat the chief of Lalle district, who had imprudently raided a village near Ouagadougou, and he concluded that the ruler did not have an army. The fact is, however, that Crozat was in Ouagadougou between September 9 and September 30, a period when the potential soldiers of the Mogho Naba had not yet harvested their crops. Had Crozat remained in Mossi country for three or four months longer, he would have seen the ruler's army in action; for, as a matter of fact, the Lalle Naba's attack on Mogho Naba Wobogo was but the latest episode in a prolonged struggle between the two rulers.